

MARCH 9, 1987

- Capacity management: No longer a black art
- The future of micros
- How to fight F.U.D.

COMPUTER DECISIONS

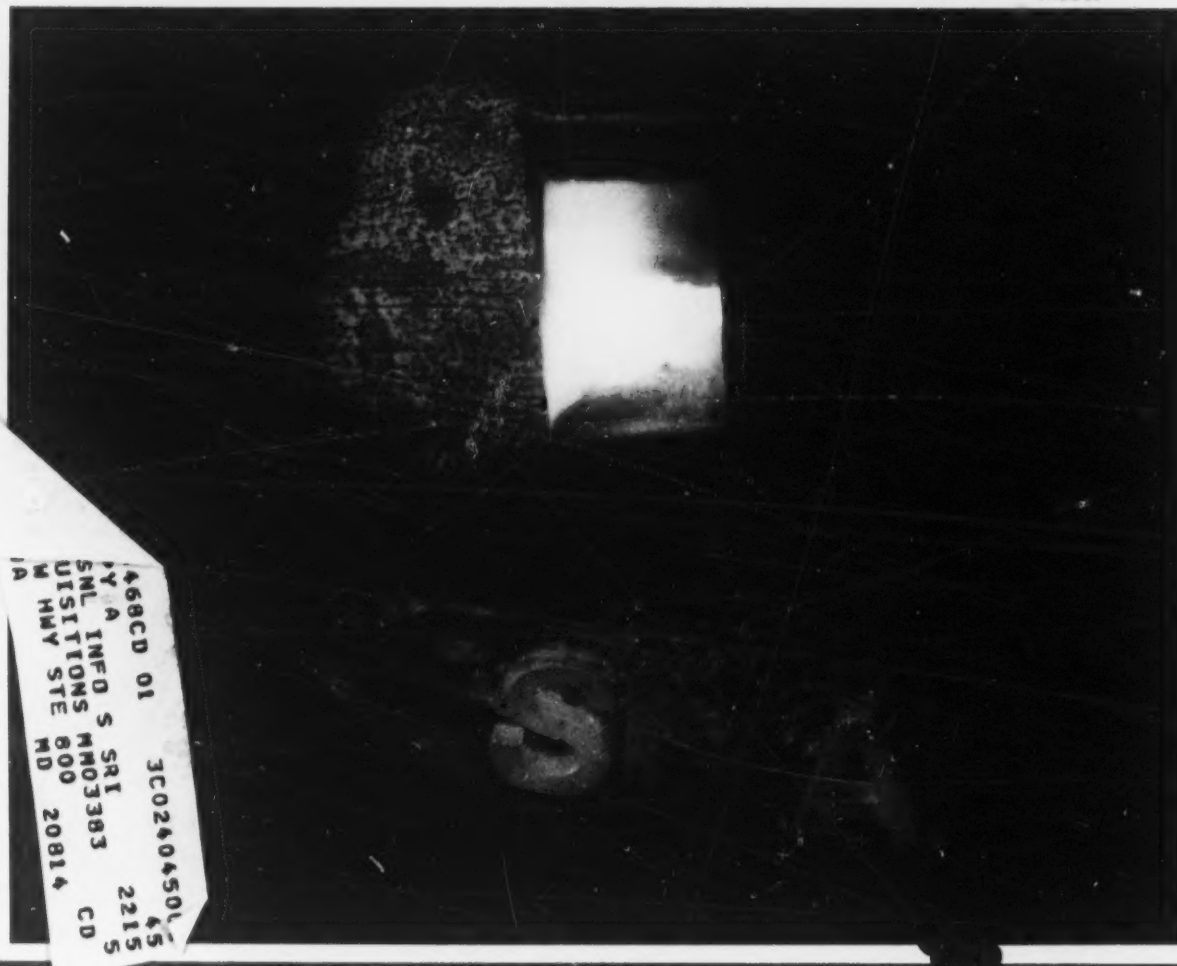
THE MAGAZINE FOR MIS EXECUTIVES

A HAYDEN PUBLICATION

SPECIAL REPORT REFORGING SNA

IBM's implementation of a "distributed" SNA is incomplete.
New offerings, however, foreshadow the shape of the new SNA.

PAGE 30



468CD 01 3C02404501
NY A INFO S SRI 45
SML INFD S SRI 2215
POSITIONS MM03383
MD HWY STE 600 20814
CD

C4485-1A-
3/12/87
DOWN TO MACBUSINESS

NEWS

12 News Scan

News Analysis:

- 14** Open Mac knocks at front door
Apple flexes some new muscle
- 18** Mac II: Birth of a Sun-killer?
- 22** Cost-conscious MIS is fighting F.U.D.

STRICTLY SOFTWARE



- 42 Planning for a distributed age/As distributed processing becomes a reality in more corporations, MIS managers have to rethink their views about capacity management.**

MICRO DECISIONS

- 48 Dawn of the work-station era/The arrival of the 386 micro gives MIS the right tool to distribute processing power to desktops.**
- 53 Valiant effort turns novice into superhero /A mild-mannered office worker leaps technical barriers with a database management package for customized business use.**

SPECIAL REPORT:



NETWORKS & COMMUNICATIONS

Cover Story

- 26 Pieces of the new SNA/IBM says it is going to transform SNA into an architecture for distributed communications and processing. The change may take a while.**
- 32 Questions remain open on SNA in midrange/Although IBM has cleared some of the air regarding the place of its midrange computers in SNA, questions remain.**
- 34 Choosing muxes for specific reasons/T-1 is frequently—but not always—the answer. MIS managers gear multiplexer choices to their organizations' specific needs.**

FOLLOWING THE LEADERS

- 40 IBM and OSI: A forced match/In Europe, market pressures have forced IBM to embrace OSI. When will concessions be made here?**

Computer Decisions (USPS 771-040 ISSN 0010-4558) is published biweekly for \$65 per year by Hayden Publishing Co., Inc., a subsidiary of VNU, 10 Mulholland Dr., Hasbrouck Heights, NJ 07604. Second-class postage paid at Hackensack, NJ 07602, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address change to *Computer Decisions*, P.O. Box 1031, Southeastern, PA 19398. For subscription information, please call (215) 337-8623.

STRATEGIC SYSTEMS

- 54 Unparalleled processing/Systems based on truly parallel architecture promise great benefits, but developing them will take time.**

DEPARTMENTAL COMPUTING



- 56 Users find ways to slow presses/Desk-top publishing and page layout may make the print shop obsolete for corporate uses.**

CIO

- 58 MIS hedges on the AI gamble/In many corporations, MIS is passing on getting involved in the development of artificial-intelligence systems. Some believe that may not be a wise move.**

DEPARTMENTS

- 8 Insight/**Users deserve more from IBM on SNA
- 10 Letters**
- 62 Application/Kodak** conjures up two machines in one
- 62 Products**
- 64 Ad index**
- Copies printed: 181,632**
- Cover photo: Bob Ward**

easy to use. The fourth-rated package, the Primavera Project Planner (\$4,000) from Primavera Systems Inc., Bala Cynwyd, PA, was rated more powerful than the top three, but harder to use.

Power and ease of use aside, Software Digest (Philadelphia) cautions that Microsoft Project lacks the important resource leveling function, the process of manipulating a schedule to reduce conflicts in the use of resources for a project. Time Line and SSP's Promise have less capability in resource planning than the Primavera Project Planner, Plantrac (\$3,000, from Computerline Inc., Pembroke, MA), and Open Plan (\$4,200, Welcom Software Technology Inc. Houston).

The results are reported in the February 1987 *Software Digest Ratings Report*. Call (215) 878-9300 for more information. □

Have PBX, need ISDN

AT&T is touting recent software enhancements to its System 85 private branch exchange that make the PBX among the first to support the vendor's primary rate interface (23B & D channels) specifications for ISDN. But any user enthusiasm should be tempered by the fact that, in the United States anyway, there is no standard ISDN with which to connect.

Greg Carlsted, senior industry analyst for Dataquest, a San Jose, CA-based consultancy, says that System 85 reaffirms AT&T's commitment to Integrated Services Digital Network, but beyond that he sees "extremely limited" applications for the com-

puter's primary rate interface. Carlsted adds that the enhanced System 85 supports a byte-oriented signaling protocol that runs counter to the bit-oriented DMI interface, the currently favored ISDN signaling protocol.

Siemens Communications Systems Inc. (Boca Raton, FL) also offers ISDN-compatible equipment; the West German-based vendor's Hi Comm PBX, which also supports the ISDN primary rate interface, is already installed and running in Europe. However, Susan Gauff, a Siemens spokeswoman, notes that Europe already has an approved primary rate ISDN interface standard. That standard has been endorsed by the Geneva-based Consultative Committee on International Telephone and Telegraph. "Siemens believes it is premature to announce an ISDN-compatible product in the United

States because there are no set standards," says Gauff. □

IBM and DEC chip away

IBM and DEC have demonstrated how to use financial muscle to compete in markets—specifically, the engineering workstation arena—in which bolder but smaller competitors lead.

Using advanced silicon technology, the computer giants were able to shrink systems electronics in their 32-bit workstations from four boards to one. As a result, IBM was able to triple the speed of its RT Personal Computer, while Digital Equipment Corp. dropped the price of its MicroVAX workstations by 50 percent.

One year after introducing the RT PC, IBM announced three new RT PCs with IBM's new 1-Mbyte

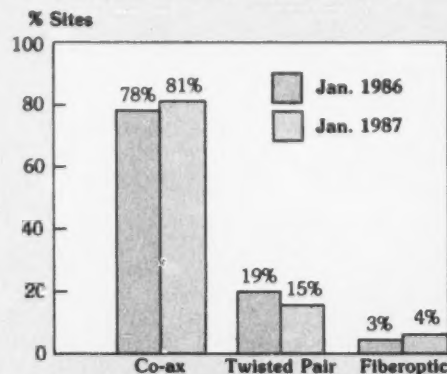
memory chips. The new models offer four times the memory (16 Mbytes) of the original, an advanced CMOS processor that can triple processing speed, and a built-in 20-MHz floating-point accelerator that increases number-crunching capability by eight times. The new models offer the same maximum 210 Mbytes of hard-disk storage as the original, but they contain a new adapter that quadruples the speed data move between memory and disk. Another new adapter allows high-resolution displays (1,024 pixels by 1,024 pixels) to be connected directly to the RT PC instead of having to go through IBM's 5085 Graphics Display System.

RT PC Models 115, 125, and B25 cost from \$10,600 to \$17,670, down from the original \$11,700 to \$19,510 range.

IBM is also offering discounts of more than 25 percent to users who buy the new models in quantities of 20 or more. The new machines are scheduled for release in May.

Although rated at the same .9 million instructions per second as the original MicroVAX II, DEC's new MicroVAX 2000 and VAXstation 2000 contain downsized electronics that allow the vendor to sell the machines for about half the price of the old models. The VAXstation 2000 technical workstation package includes a floating-point accelerator, a high-resolution monitor, and an Ethernet adapter, and costs from \$10,500 to \$22,245. The MicroVAX 2000 for commercial applications costs from \$11,100 to \$20,195. The machines will ship in 90 days, DEC says. □

CO-AX LANs PREVAIL



Source: Computer Intelligence

Even though IBM and AT&T are now shipping the twisted-pair media for their Token-Ring and Starlan local-area networks, a survey by Computer Intelligence, La Jolla, CA-based market researchers, found that the number of LANs installed with co-axial wiring actually increased in 1986.